

THE BLOOMFIELD CITIZEN.

SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 1889.

The Second Century of the Republic.

The Republic is no longer young. It has passed its majority. One hundred years have come and gone since the Constitution was adopted. The young Republic, cradled in the agonies of the Revolution, has become the triumphant Democracy of the present day. Three millions of people spread over thirteen States have become sixty millions in forty-two States. The small commonwealth stretching from Maine to Florida has become the grand Union of States reaching from British America to Mexico, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans.

This result of a century's progress has not been attained without many heroic struggles. Foes without and foes within have threatened the nation's life. The jealousies of foreign nations have not prevented the young Republic from asserting its rights upon the water, or its supremacy over the interests of the Western Hemisphere. Even the dark blot of slavery has been wiped out with the blood of a million freemen.

The result of a century of growth is a tribute to the ability, the patriotism, and the foresight of those who framed the Constitution and secured its adoption by the Confederacy of States. The names of Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Hamilton, Franklin, and many others stand out upon the rolls of fame with transcendent brilliancy after a century has passed away.

Among them the name of Washington stands pre-eminent for worth, dignity, and moral grandeur. Never an office seeker, his modesty shrank from every new responsibility thrust upon him—only to yield to the demands of the people. Yet there was no place which he did not adorn, no office which was not made more illustrious by his occupancy.

The coming week in New York shall once more testify to the universal reverence in which his name is held by the American people, and kindle anew the flame of patriotism by the contemplation of his example.

The Constitution, the adoption of which the coming centennial will celebrate, was not "struck out at a blow" as the Hon. Wm. E. Gladstone has said. Its root was found in the characters of the colonies, developing after more than a century of experience in the Constitution's of the several states of the Confederacy. These had the lower and upper houses with the Governor as executive and the Judicial Courts. Thus the experiment of governments with co-ordinate, legislative, judicial and executive departments had already been worked out in the experience of the people. None the less the able men who formed these ideas into a homogeneous national Constitution are deserving the reverence and gratitude of a still united nation. From France, then on the verge of its own revolution, came the idea of equality presented in the Declaration of Independence; from England and Colonial experience came the written Constitution of the United States. After a century of growth it is still intact with only fifteen amendments, ten of which were so soon adopted as to have been almost simultaneous with the acceptance of the Constitution itself.

Dothless some new amendments are needed, yet the most Democratic people in the world in theory, are in practice the most Conservative. The ballot is the safety-valve of popular passion. The executive is safe because the people are free.

Two centuries and a half are past since the first colonist landed upon these shores. In wealth, in resources, in numbers, this Republic is the equal, may the superior of the most powerful nation on the globe. The present centennial should bring not only rejoicing, but a thoughtful appreciation of the responsibilities of the nation.

As thousands gather to witness the displays of military power and commercial activity, there should be also a revival of patriotism, and of gratitude to that Divine Providence which has guided the nation in the past and to which it must look for prosperity in the future.

What growth in population and wealth may be in store for this nation no man can tell. Before another century has passed its sixty millions of people shall probably have grown to two hundred millions, and its wealth be measured by untold billions of dollars. It shall be well, if with such prosperity there shall also increase a desire to help the weak and unfortunate among the nations, to promote liberty and happiness among its own people, and to hold up to the world an example of peace, good will and righteousness.

Clean Newspapers.

In a letter to the Editor of The Mail and Express, Cleveland Able, of the U. S. Signal Service Bureau, has this to say in regard to newspaper reports:

attempted enforcement of Sabbath Laws, Marriage and Divorce Laws, etc. Take for example, the non-enforcement of the existing Sunday laws in our own state and town. The laws are there, upon the statute, but are they respected? There is notoriously more drinking and more drunkenness on Sunday than upon any other day of the week. If the effect of prohibiting legislation with respect to one day is to thus increase the evil; what would be reasonably expected from "prohibition" applied to every day of the week? Certainly not any lessening of the evil, but rather more hypocrisy and open contempt for law in the end.

The National Reform Association moves, as an important means to the end of the moral and religious reforms that it desires to see accomplished, a Constitutional amendment establishing "the nation's allegiance to Jesus Christ," and a placing of "all Christian laws, institutions and usages on an *undeniable legal basis* in the fundamental law of the land."

That proposition involves either a complete reconstruction of existing institutions, social and political, in strict accord with the teachings of Jesus, or, on the other hand, a most stupendous example of Phariseism. It is probably the latter; for this National Reform Association—a sort of modern Sabbathists, containing among its four score officers scarcely one who is not a D. D., or an LL. D.—would be the last to think of endorsing such commands as "Judge not," "Swear not at all." Their kind of Christianity has for its fundamental principle a very rigorous judgment and condemnation of others in all questions of morality, religion and law, notwithstanding the Founder of Christianity not only demonstrated the impossibility of administering human justice. What a mockery, then, is it for this Association to profess "allegiance to Jesus Christ," whose altruistic precepts, benevolent principles and spotless example, as touching reforms, they can no more endure than did the Ish priests and elders of old. Throughout all the "Christian principles" set forth above, is there a syllable of sympathy expressed for the victims of injustice and greed, the underpaid and overworked that we meet on every hand? Mentioning Christ in state papers, and proclamations will be very appropriate when those who are so eager to show their piety have endorsed and begun to practice, in all humility and sincerity, the gospel taught in the Sermon on the Mount.

Meanwhile, from the type of religion which they now have nationalized little else at best than a barren formalism, and extraneous and all the train of evils connected with them will cease to be familiar sights among Christians. A Christian woman will shrink in horror from large quantities of meat which minister to vanity, on every side there are many ways in which one's money can be expended in the service of humanity, which label will be abolished, when the real reform is to come. If we fail to put our government, with all its restraining and educating power, on the side of temperance, the conflict of religion at the most pressing of the practical issues before the American people, there lies no mere question of political economy, or even of morality, but the nation's responsibility for the drunkenness of its citizens, and for the long catalogue of consequent sorrows and crimes.

By reason of this underlying unity it will come out that the weakest part of our questions is the shallowness of our Public Education from religion, a generation will rise up who will have forgotten the Sabbath. If we depart from the Christian standard of the Family and the State, we shall also fail to put our government, with all its restraining and educating power, on the side of temperance in the conflict that is already upon us, and that must be fought to the death. The human heart, like a flower, loves to grow, and when it is plucked from its stem, it withers and dies. The rich and powerful will be true ministers, true servants of all mankind, when they have learned to be honest and upright, and when their example and conduct according to their chosen representatives. All controversies over our public schools are phases of the one question: What relation should Public Education in a Christian nation bear to the public schools? At the heart of the Temperance question lies the most pressing of the practical issues before the American people, there lies no mere question of political economy, or even of morality, but the nation's responsibility for the drunkenness of its citizens, and for the long catalogue of consequent sorrows and crimes.

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Prof. Richard T. Ely entertains the views last quoted. The School of Reform of which he is an acknowledged leader is willing to let "well enough alone" as regards reforming the Constitution in respect to religion, holding that what now passes for Christianity is in the greatest need of being reformed in the simple matter of personal allegiance to Jesus Christ.

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No greater fallacy is there than to imagine or believe, that men and women can be made moral or religious in regard to drinking, or observing the Sabbath, marrying, or in any other religious or socialistic respect, by the enactment or

attempted enforcement of Sabbath Laws, Marriage and Divorce Laws, etc.

Take for example, the non-enforcement of the existing Sunday laws in our own state and town. The laws are there, upon the statute, but are they respected?

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